

# **State of Alaska FY2007 Governor's Operating Budget**

## **Department of Health and Social Services State Medical Examiner Component Budget Summary**

## Component: State Medical Examiner

### Contribution to Department's Mission

The Department's mission is to promote and protect the health and well-being of Alaskans. In support of this mission, the State Medical Examiner's Office (SMEO) provides a statewide system for the medical-legal investigation of unanticipated, sudden, and violent deaths in order to provide accurate, legally defensible determinations of the cause of death and information to ensure appropriate follow-up on all child deaths in the state.

### Core Services

As required by law, investigate and certify all deaths that occur within the state of Alaska that are a result of violence, suspected violence, deaths due to accidental causes, deaths that occur during incarceration, deaths that are associated with conditions that pose a hazard to public safety or health, and all unattended or unexplained deaths. The central facility in Anchorage provides post mortem examinations appropriate for each case referred and includes access to state-of-the-art forensic medical services, including forensic pathology and radiology, odontology, anthropology and the services of the Department of Public Safety Scientific Crime Detection Laboratory.

For those deaths that are investigated, establish identity of deceased if necessary, maintain records and evidence, provide legally defensible determinations of the cause and manner of death, and present findings of the investigation to courts, law enforcement agencies, and other parties with legitimate interests in the death.

Examine living persons to collect evidence as a result of previous injuries.

Participate in training personnel involved in death investigations, including forensic medico legal investigators, local physicians, state and local police, village public safety officers and other authorities.

### FY2007 Resources Allocated to Achieve Results

<b>FY2007 Component Budget: \$1,999,600</b>	<b>Personnel:</b>	
	Full time	15
	Part time	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>

### Key Component Challenges

Increasing numbers of statewide autopsies, consults and teaching affect the ability for the medical examiner to maintain and perform the increased workload each year, with the limited number of staff and limited budget allocations.

Continuing to bring the autopsy suite and embalming/decomposition suite into compliance with OSHA regulations and standards is costly. The SMEO will proceed as funding permits.

During the FY07 the office will continue on the prescribed track towards accreditation, following the guidelines of the National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME), as funding permits.

### Significant Changes in Results to be Delivered in FY2007

Additional staff will allow work in the area of public health surveillance to detect new or unexpected infectious diseases and to provide information about preventable causes of death. Additional staff and funding will allow increased

collaboration and important interaction with departments and agencies such as outside of the public health arena such as Public Safety, Courts and other law agencies. Additional funding will also allow an increase in the number of autopsies performed (from 252 in FY05 to over 700 in FY07), more time for preparation of important court cases, and better rotation of the on-call responsibilities for staff in the State Medical Examiner Office.

The State Medical Examiner's Office is undertaking a three year improvement plan in FY06-FY08 which will improve the services to the public as well as allow the office to receive national accreditation. The goals for FY06 included hiring a Deputy Medical Examiner (as new statute requires) and obtaining a safety review; both of these goals have been obtained. Yet to be accomplished this year is to create a new autopsy assistant position to assist with increasing the number of autopsies performed to 400 (up from 252 in 2005).

The FY07 increment would allow the following portions of the three year plan to be accomplished: recruitment of a third medical examiner, creation of additional autopsy assistant and investigator positions, meet statutory requirements of Child Fatality Review Board, attain OSHA safety standards, and perform more than 700 autopsies (up from 400 projected for FY06). The final year of the three year plan (FY08) would include incremental funding to allow for creation of an additional autopsy assistant and an administrative assistant position, allow for more field travel to site of incident rather than relying on phone/computer communication, upgrade of radiology equipment and communication tools, reduce turnover and improve employee competencies and morale, and meet all requirements for national accreditation.

### Major Component Accomplishments in 2005

Total cases reported:	1,579
Cases autopsied:	252
Cases with consult:	851
Cases with inspection:	40
Cases with natural cause:	436

Successfully recruited and hired new Deputy Medical Examiner in compliance with HB 225 passed in 2005, to enable the Medical Examiner's Office to meet the expectations of increased autopsies performed and surveillance to detect new or unexpected infectious diseases.

Began the accreditation track, as recommended by the National Association of Medical Examiners. Worked to adopt newly established national NAME standards for autopsies. This project will be accomplished as funding permits.

Enhanced the quality of performance of the Child Fatality Review Committee.

The Bone Committee continued collaboration with anthropological staff at the University of Alaska and the workload of the forensic odontologist continued to grow. Through this effort, cases are being solved and missing persons identified.

Continued improvement in the quality of statistical information for various state and federal organizations by comparing previous years' case files processed to the current-year case files. Archived case files from 1992 to 1994 to magnetic media storage.

Upgraded the nationally recognized medical examiner case database system.

### Statutory and Regulatory Authority

AS 12.65	Death Investigations and Medical Examinations
7 AAC 35	Embalming

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### State Medical Examiner Component Financial Summary

*All dollars shown in thousands*

	FY2005 Actuals	FY2006 Management Plan	FY2007 Governor
<b>Non-Formula Program:</b>			
<b>Component Expenditures:</b>			
71000 Personal Services	890.9	1,141.5	1,522.7
72000 Travel	8.3	8.5	18.5
73000 Services	210.8	221.6	304.5
74000 Commodities	100.1	53.9	103.9
75000 Capital Outlay	8.3	0.0	50.0
77000 Grants, Benefits	0.0	0.0	0.0
78000 Miscellaneous	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Expenditure Totals</b>	<b>1,218.4</b>	<b>1,425.5</b>	<b>1,999.6</b>
<b>Funding Sources:</b>			
1004 General Fund Receipts	1,218.4	1,403.8	1,977.9
1156 Receipt Supported Services	0.0	21.7	21.7
<b>Funding Totals</b>	<b>1,218.4</b>	<b>1,425.5</b>	<b>1,999.6</b>

### Estimated Revenue Collections

Description	Master Revenue Account	FY2005 Actuals	FY2006 Management Plan	FY2007 Governor
<b><u>Unrestricted Revenues</u></b>				
None.		0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Unrestricted Total</b>		<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
<b><u>Restricted Revenues</u></b>				
Receipt Supported Services	51073	0.0	21.7	21.7
<b>Restricted Total</b>		<b>0.0</b>	<b>21.7</b>	<b>21.7</b>
<b>Total Estimated Revenues</b>		<b>0.0</b>	<b>21.7</b>	<b>21.7</b>

**Summary of Component Budget Changes  
From FY2006 Management Plan to FY2007 Governor**

*All dollars shown in thousands*

	<u>General Funds</u>	<u>Federal Funds</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>
<b>FY2006 Management Plan</b>	<b>1,403.8</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>21.7</b>	<b>1,425.5</b>
<b>Adjustments which will continue current level of service:</b>				
-FY 07 Wage Increases for Bargaining Units and Non-Covered Employees	20.7	0.0	0.0	20.7
-FY 07 Health Insurance Cost Increases for Bargaining Units and Non-Covered Employees	2.3	0.0	0.0	2.3
-FY 07 Retirement Systems Cost Increase	39.0	0.0	0.0	39.0
<b>Proposed budget increases:</b>				
-Risk Management Self-Insurance Funding Increase	12.1	0.0	0.0	12.1
-Public Health Protection:State Medical Examiner Improvement Plan	500.0	0.0	0.0	500.0
<b>FY2007 Governor</b>	<b>1,977.9</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>21.7</b>	<b>1,999.6</b>

### State Medical Examiner Personal Services Information

Authorized Positions			Personal Services Costs	
	<u>FY2006</u> <u>Management</u> <u>Plan</u>	<u>FY2007</u> <u>Governor</u>		
Full-time	13	15	Annual Salaries	974,328
Part-time	0	0	COLA	26,417
Nonpermanent	2	2	Premium Pay	16,773
			Annual Benefits	522,676
			Less 1.14% Vacancy Factor	(17,494)
			Lump Sum Premium Pay	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>Total Personal Services</b>	<b>1,522,700</b>

### Position Classification Summary

Job Class Title	Anchorage	Fairbanks	Juneau	Others	Total
Administrative Clerk II	1	0	0	0	1
Administrative Clerk III	1	0	0	0	1
Autopsy Assistant	4	0	0	0	4
Embalmer	2	0	0	0	2
Investigator I	5	0	0	0	5
Investigator II	1	0	0	0	1
Staff Physician	2	0	0	0	2
State Medical Examiner/Chief	1	0	0	0	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17</b>